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DANIELLE BRAZELL
GENERAL MANAGER

April 24, 2020

Honorable Budget and Finance Committee Members
c/o: City Clerk, City Hall, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members:

In accordance with the Budget and Finance Committee Chair's request dated April 21, 2020, the Department of Cultural Affairs submits the following comments on the Proposed FY20/21 Budget.

The Department supports the Mayor's FY20/21 Proposed Budget. It maintains baseline programs and staffing for the agency in alignment with the mission, values, and operational structure of the Department. To further these priorities, the Department is deploying innovative strategies to deliver services to the City's residents and visitors as well as to the arts and cultural sector.

The COVID-19 crisis effectively cancelled all arts and cultural events in Los Angeles, resulting in a significant financial impact on individual artists and nonprofit arts and cultural organizations who are our key partners in delivering arts and cultural services in the city.

To mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the City's residents and visitors, the Department is working diligently to safeguard and assist our nonprofit arts and cultural organizational partners weather the economic fallout caused by the global pandemic and continue to deliver cultural programs citywide, especially when we need the arts to uplift our spirits and navigate this difficult moment in our city's history. After all, arts, culture, and creativity are essential aspects of what makes our city vibrant. They are also vital to accelerating our regional economic recovery.

The Department remains committed to advancing the arts and cultural ecosystem of our city and assisting the sector through this seismic disruption by elevating the role of art and culture as core aspects of our civic values. To further these priorities, the Department has responded by implementing the following strategies:

- **COMMUNITY ARTS** - Through the Department's Arts and Cultural Centers, the Community Arts Division is transitioning to online classes and cultural programming to YouTube, Zoom, Vimeo, and Google Classroom. The centers are continuing to support the youth, adult, and senior populations, and continuing their role as trusted ambassadors to the communities they serve.
- **CULTURAL GRANTS FOR FAMILIES AND YOUTH** - This program catalyzes over 1,400 exhibitions, performances, events, and cultural services for family and young people annually. In light of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic, the grants team has moved all



- presentations online. In addition, the Department is now adapting its services to provide urgent relief to artists and arts organizations in collaboration with the Public Art Division.
- **MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT** - The Marketing, Development, Design, and Digital Research Division is amplifying all of the programming and content created by the Department, and is making information on resources available to artists, organizations, and individuals seeking arts and cultural experiences as well as relief funds.
- **PERFORMING ARTS** - The Performing Arts Program is maintaining oversight of capital improvement projects at several venues: Madrid Theatre and the Canoga Park Stage Arts Lab (CD3), Vision Theatre (CD10), and Warner Grand Theatre (CD15), and is preparing to reopen the city theatres in accordance with Los Angeles County Department of Public Health requirements.
- **PUBLIC ART** - The Public Art Division is developing a Public Works Administration-style program to put mural and public artists back to work. This will likely include reducing the size of commissions to include more artists to create public artworks for our city. This includes reducing the size of each Percent for Art commission to employ more artists.

These strategies will continue to evolve as we respond to the myriad of challenges and opportunities caused by the global pandemic. The Department will work with the Budget and Finance Committee on some technical adjustments required to implement the budget.

I thank the Mayor, the City Administrative Officer, and their staff members for the diligent and thoughtful preparation that accompanied this budget process, particularly as the COVID-19 pandemic altered the physical and economic landscape in a very short period of time.

We look forward to our continued partnership with the City Council through this budget process and the upcoming fiscal year. Thank you for your consideration of our comments, and for your ongoing commitment to arts, culture, and creativity for all in our city.

Sincerely,



DANIELLE BRAZELL
General Manager
City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs

cc: Barbara Romero, Deputy Mayor, Office of the Mayor
Miguel Sangalang, Deputy Mayor, Office of the Mayor
Diana Mangioglu, Budget Director, Office of the Mayor
Richard H. Llewellyn, City Administrative Officer
Sharon Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst
Carol Armstrong, Ph.D., Executive Officer, Office of the Mayor
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